

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A point management method that manages points that are given to a user customer, comprising:

a step of confirming an expiration date of points of a giving source user customer, after accepting a request for giving points from the giving source user customer of points, by referring to a user customer database that stores information of the number of points that the user customer has and the expiration date, according to each member;

a step of accepting designation of a giving number of points and a giving destination user customer from the giving source user customer, in a case where the expiration date of points of the giving source user customer has not passed; and;

a step of subtracting the designated giving number of points from the number of points of the giving source user customer that is stored in said user customer database, and adding the giving number of points to the number of points of the giving destination user customer that is stored in said user customer database.

2. (Currently Amended) The point management method according to claim 1, further comprising:

a step of extracting information of a user customer that belongs to the same group as the group that the giving source user customer belongs, from a belonging database that stores information, correlating a user customer and a group to which the user customer belongs;

a step of providing the extracted information of users customers to the user customer terminal of the giving source user customer, as information of candidates of being the giving destination user customer; and

a step of accepting a user customer, selected by the giving source user customer, from the candidates of the giving destination user customer, as the giving destination user customer.

3. (Currently Amended) The point management method according to claim 1, further comprising a step of extracting information of the group to which the giving destination user customer belongs and the group to which the giving source user customer belongs, from the

belonging database that stores information, correlating a user customer and a group to which the user customer belongs, and making giving of point possible to the giving destination user customer, in a case where the group to which the giving destination user customer belongs and the group to which the giving source user customer belongs match.

4. (Currently Amended) The point management method according to claim 1, further comprising:

a step of determining whether the expiration date of points of the giving destination user customer has passed, by referring to said user customer database; and

a step of making giving of points possible to the giving destination user customer from the giving source user customer, in a case where the expiration date of the giving destination user customer has not passed.

5. (Currently Amended) A management computer that is connected to a user customer database that stores information of the number of points that a user customer has and expiration date of the points that the user customer has, correlating it with identification information of the user customer, comprising:

a request receiving unit which receives a request for giving of points, including identification information of the giving source user customer, from a terminal, via a network;

an expiration date confirming unit which searches the user customer database based on the identification information of the giving source user customer, and confirms that the expiration date of points of the giving source member that is stored in the user customer database, has not passed;

a giving content receiving unit which receives information that specifies the giving number of points and giving destination user customer, from said terminal, via said network, in a case where it is confirmed that the expiration date of points of the giving source user customer has not passed; and

a point number updating unit which subtracts the giving number of points from the number of points of the giving source user customer that is stored in said user customer database, and adds the giving number of points to the number of points of the giving destination user customer that is stored in said user customer database.

6. (Currently Amended) The management computer according to claim 5, wherein, said management computer is further connected to a belonging database that stores identification information of each user customer and group identification information of the group to which the user customer belongs, and the user customer information of each user customer is further stored in said user customer database, and

said giving content receiving unit:

extracts identification information of users customers correlated with the same group identification information as the group identification information of the group, which the giving source user customer belongs to, from said belonging database, and extracts user customer information that corresponds to the identification information of the extracted users customers, from said user customer database;

sends the extracted user customer information as information of candidates of the giving destination user customer, to the terminal of the giving source user customer; and

receives from said terminal, information indicating the giving destination user customer, which is designated from the candidates of the giving destination user customer, by the giving source user customer.

7. (Currently Amended) The management computer according to claim 5, wherein said management computer is further connected to a belonging database that stores identification information of users customers and group identification information of the group to which said user customer belongs, correlated with each other, and

said point number updating unit:

extracts group identification information of the group to which the giving destination user customer belongs and group identification information of the group to which the giving source user customer belongs, from said belonging database;

determines whether the extracted group identification information matches or not; and

makes giving of points to the giving destination user customer possible, in a case where the extracted group identification information matches.

8. (Currently Amended) The management computer according to claim 5, wherein said point number updating unit determines whether the expiration date of points of the giving destination user customer has passed or not, by referring to said user customer database, and makes giving of points from the giving source user customer to the giving destination user customer possible, in a case where the expiration date of points of the giving destination user customer has not passed.

9. (Currently Amended) A computer readable recording medium that stores a program for controlling a computer to execute:

- a step of receiving a request of point giving, including identification information of the giving source user customer, from a terminal, via a network;

- a step of searching a user customer database that stores the number of points that a user customer has and the expiration date, based on the identification information of the giving source user customer, and confirms that the expiration date of points of the giving source user customer, which is stored in the user customer database, has not passed;

- a step of obtaining information that specifies the giving number of points and the giving destination user customer, from said terminal, via said network, in a case where it is confirmed that the expiration date of points of the giving source user customer has not passed; and

- a step of subtracting the giving number of points from the number of points of the giving source user customer, stored in the user customer database, and adding the giving number of points to the number of points of the giving destination user customer, stored in the user customer database.

10. (Currently Amended) The computer readable recording medium according to claim 9, that stores said program for further controlling a computer to execute:

- a step of extracting the identification information of the users customers correlated with the same group identification information as the group identification information of the group, which the giving source user customer belongs to, from the belonging database that stores the identification information of the users customers and the identification information of the group to which the user customer belongs, correlated with each other;

a step of extracting the user customer information that corresponds to the extracted identification information of the user customer, from the user customer database that further stores user customer information of each user customer;

a step of sending the extracted user customer information to the terminal of the giving source user customer, as information of candidates of the giving destination user customer; and

a step of receiving from said terminal, information indicating the giving destination user customer, selected from the candidates of the giving destination user customer.

11. (Currently Amended) The computer readable recording medium according to claim 9, that stores said program for further controlling a computer to execute a step of:

extracting group identification information of the group to which the giving destination user customer belongs and the group identification information of the group to which the giving source user customer belongs, from the belonging database that stores, correlating with each other, identification information of the user customer and group identification information of the group to which the user customer belongs;

determining whether the extracted group identification information matches; and

making possible the giving of points to the giving destination user customer, in a case where the extracted group identification information matches.

12. (Currently Amended) The computer readable recording medium according to claim 9, that stores said program for further controlling a computer to execute:

a step of determining whether the expiration date of the points of the giving destination user customer has passed or not, by referring to the user customer database; and

a step of making possible the giving of points to the giving destination user customer from the giving source user customer, in a case where the expiration date of points of the giving destination user customer has not passed.

13. (Currently Amended) A computer data signal, embedded in a carrier wave, and representing a program for controlling a computer, which is connected to a user customer database

that stores correlating, the number of points that a user customer has and information of expiration date with the identification information of the user customer, to execute:

a step of receiving a request for giving points, including identification information of the giving source user customer, from a terminal via a network;

a step of searching the user customer database, based on the identification information of the giving source user customer, and confirming that the expiration date of the points of the giving source user customer, stored in the user customer database has not passed;

a step of obtaining information that specifies the giving number of points and the giving destination user customer from said terminal via said network, in a case where it is confirmed that the expiration date of the points of the giving source user customer has not passed; and

a step of subtracting the giving number of points from the number of points of the giving source user customer, stored in the user customer database, and adding the giving number of points to the number of points of the giving destination user customer, stored in the user customer database.